

his wife Caitlyn Bellina, and he has three boys.

This is what Matt Bellina said in testimony:

Please let them know that I have had ALS too long to meet the exclusion criteria for any promising trials. No drug company will offer me treatments under the current expanded access guidelines. Two reputable companies have already indicated that they would try to treat me under the rules of this bill. A vote against this is essentially a vote to kill me. It is a vote to make my wife a widow and leave my boys fatherless. I can't stop anyone from voting that way, but please ask them to have respect to look my family in the eye when they cast their vote.

Frank Mongiello is another victim of ALS. I just met with him a few hours ago. I first met with him when he could speak—he can no longer speak—but he spoke at our press conference, and here is his quote. He paraphrased Abraham Lincoln and he said:

President Lincoln said, “If I am killed, I die only once; but if I dread it, I die over and over again.”

Frank went on to say:

I have an 80-percent chance to be dead in 2 years, and, for me, seeing these potential drugs out on the market and not being able to take them is like dying over and over again.

The final namesake of this bill is little Jordan McLinn. We met him when he was 6 years old, and now he is 8. His mother Laura is a tireless advocate. I know the Senator from Indiana knows the McLinns well.

The FDA advisory committee on April 25 heard from, I think, 55 witnesses about a drug called eteplirsen to treat Duchenne's muscular dystrophy. The advisory committee, having heard from people like Laura and Jordan McLinn wanting access to that drug, voted no. Fortunately, the FDA—and this is pretty rare—overruled the advisory committee, and Jordan now is at least being treated. They are tireless advocates for Right to Try.

These are the people we need to help. These are the people whom Right to Try was meant for.

I don't know why it took the House 7 months to craft a bill and finally vote on it. I can't tell you how many people during that 7 months sought treatment in other countries. I can't tell you if anyone during that time period possibly lost their life because they didn't have access to treatment. I don't know why the House felt compelled to change the bill that we carefully crafted that passed unanimously. I don't know why they simply didn't take up the Senate bill and pass it, but I do know Right to Try saves lives.

I will quote one example, Dr. Delpassand, a courageous oncologist from Houston. He was engaged in an FDA trial treating an aggressive form of endocrine cancer. It was working. So he petitioned the FDA to allow additional patients to be added to the trial. The FDA said no, but Dr. Delpassand had a Right to Try bill in Texas. It didn't have liability protection. He risked his career and all of his posses-

sions and he signed up additional people under the Texas Right to Try laws.

In the end, he signed up 176 people. We just checked with Dr. Delpassand, and 148 of those individuals are still alive today because of his courage. That is why we need to pass a Federal Right to Try law, so individuals with that level of courage don't risk their careers, and those patients have a chance to live.

I would like to yield to the Senator from Indiana for his remarks.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. DONNELLY. Thank you, Mr. President, and thank you to the Senator from Wisconsin.

I echo my support for this legislation. We worked together nonstop to get this accomplished, as has been mentioned.

This passed the Senate 100 to nothing already. We are hopeful to wrap this up. The House just sent us a vote back, and we will continue to work nonstop to get this done because it is the right thing to do.

I think of the McLinn family in my home State, and they are a representation of families all over the country struggling with the same challenges. Our job is to try to make their lives a little bit easier, a little bit better, so that all of the people who are struggling with Right to Try challenges can get a chance to live their life to the fullest and for a long time.

So, the hour is late. I just want to second the efforts of my friend and colleague from Wisconsin, and we will continue to move forward.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wisconsin.

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Indiana who has been a real champion and a real partner. I know he tried to get as many House Members to vote for the House bill as he could.

By the way, that was the good news. I am calling on the House now, since we have an objection in the Senate on their bill, to please take up the Senate bill. It is a nonpartisan bill that passed unanimously through the Senate. Don't wait another hour. I know they are in recess for a couple weeks, but I am calling on them, as soon as they come back from recess, take up the Senate bill, pass it, and get it on the President's desk. It is well past time to give these patients, these terminally ill patients and their families, the Right to Try and the right to hope. So I want to again thank the Senator from Indiana.

#### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate resume legislative session for a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—H.R. 5247

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I understand there is a bill at the desk, and I ask for its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill by title for the first time.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 5247) to authorize the use of eligible investigational drugs by eligible patients who have been diagnosed with a stage of a disease or condition in which there is reasonable likelihood that death will occur within a matter of months, or with another eligible illness, and for other purposes.

Mr. JOHNSON. I now ask for a second reading and, in order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The bill will be read for the second time on the next legislative day.

#### STRENGTHENING PROTECTIONS FOR SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFICIARIES ACT OF 2018

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Finance be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 4547 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 4547) to amend titles II, VIII, and XVI of the Social Security Act to improve and strengthen the representative payment program.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. JOHNSON. I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (H.R. 4547) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

#### SIGNING AUTHORITY

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the junior Senator from Oklahoma be authorized to sign duly enrolled bills or joint resolutions from Friday, March 23, through Monday, March 26, 2018.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### APPOINTMENTS AUTHORITY

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding the upcoming adjournment of